

REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending the 20th February 1904.

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I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

THE *Hitavarta* [Calcutta] of the 7th February says that no further advance of the Tibet Mission can be effected without the permission of the Tibetans. China seems to be strongly opposed to its further advance. It will, therefore, be well for the Mission not to make an enemy of the Tibetans by crossing their frontier without their consent.

HITAVARTA,
Feb. 7th, 1904.

2. The *Burdwan Sanjivani* [Burdwan] of the 9th February wants to know the grounds on which the cost of the Tibet Mission is to be thrown on India. The Indians do not know the object of the Mission, nor have the Government indicated the benefits, commercial or otherwise, which India may expect to gain by it.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
Feb. 9th, 1904.

3. The *Mahima* [Calcutta] of the 12th February says:—
Nobody requires to be told that the cause of the present war is Russia's hankering for territory. There would have been no trouble if, instead of resolving to swallow up Manchuria, Russia had evacuated it after the Chinese war. We cannot say that the English have no interest in this war. The collision with such a Power as Japan will surely weaken Russia. This would be England's opportunity to extend her supremacy over Tibet. The Tibetan troops are, it is said, equipped with modern arms of precision. But whence could the Tibetans procure such arms unless the Russians were there to supply them? It cannot be believed that the Chinese Government in its present condition could help the Tibetans with arms. But for the fact that Russia is engaged in fighting with Japan, the British lion and the Russian bear would ere long have fought over the Tibet affair. Russian ascendancy has been a thorn in the sides of many of the great European Powers—especially of England, who has been silently watching the gradual Russian advance towards India. The injury done to British interests in China and Persia through Russian intrigue is known to all. Had not Japan been pitted against Russia, it is a question whether England would have dared to enter Tibet.

MAHIMA,
Feb. 12th, 1904.

4. In writing on the Russo-Japanese war, the *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 13th February observes as follows:—
The Russo-Japanese war in relation to India.

BANGAVASI,
Feb. 13th, 1904.

We hear it stated that though small, Japan possesses substantial worth, has a navy small in number, but great in power. Short in stature, but gifted with an iron constitution, the Jap, though a novice, is nevertheless a master of the military art. United as one soul in the hour of danger, and in spite of domestic dissensions, the Japs know very well how to sacrifice everything, even their lives, to preserve their independence. He who knows how to die, must also know how to strike a foe. And it is because the Japs know how to die, we cherish the hope that tiny Japan will succeed in beating huge Russia. Our admiration, affection, and solicitude for Japan spring from various causes. The Jap is our brother because he belongs to Asia, because the majority of the Japanese are Buddhists; and we look upon them as our own because their holiest shrine is in Gaya in India; and the Jap is our friend, because he is also a friend of England. Saturated as Japan is with Hindu ideas, we wish her victory from the very core of our hearts. Let all Asiatics, Indians, and Bengalis, looking towards heaven, solemnly and heartily exclaim, "Let Japan be victorious."

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

5. The *Suhrid* [Noakhali] of the 3rd February brings to the notice of the District Magistrate the intolerable oppressions practised by the collecting punchayet, Bajiruddin, of the Chhagalnyia police-station, and says that he is causing the poor raiyats and the helpless chaukidars much trouble and hard.

SUHRID,
Feb. 3rd, 1904.

ship by unfair means, and is in the habit of serving his own interests by directly or indirectly taking a part in all cases, civil or criminal, occurring in the above police-station. He allows his horse to roam about freely, causing incalculable loss to the poor. The local Police Sub-Inspector is indifferent to all complaints.

MEDINI BANDHAV,
Feb. 10th, 1904.

6. The *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore] of the 10th February quotes from the letter of a correspondent describing the oppressions of the Salt Police and their spies. These men very often resort to the practice of leaving

Oppressions by the Salt Police in the Midnapore district.

some country salt or saline earth unobserved, in villagers' houses, and afterwards levying blackmail upon them. The attention of the District Magistrate of Midnapore is drawn to the complaint, and he is asked to employ a detective agency to bring these high-handed proceedings to light.

MEDINI BANDHAV,

7. The same paper draws attention to the allegations of a correspondent as to the high-handedness of the local police in attempting to obtain materials for repairs to the

A case of police oppression.

Gopiballavpur police-station at a nominal price from the raiyats of mauzas Kusmasol and Dangarpara in the Midnapore district.

JASOHAR,
Feb. 10th, 1904.

8. A correspondent of the *Jasohar* [Jessore] of the 10th February says

Thefts and depredations of a tiger in certain villages in the Jessore district.

that the villages of Basundia, Basuari, Afra, Radha-nagar, and Karimpur in the Jessore district are much troubled by the depredations of a tiger, which is destroying cattle and has even attacked

men. The increase of thefts and dacoities is also referred to, and Government and the District Magistrate are appealed to, to look into the matter.

JASOHAR.

9. The same paper reports the occurrence of constant thefts of cows in many of the villages under the Manirampur police-

Theft of cattle in certain villages in the Jessore district.

station, and says that the carcasses are afterwards found in the fields with the skin taken off. The

District Magistrate is requested to look into the matter, as the attempts of the villagers to detect the thieves, who are presumably *muchis*, have so far proved ineffectual.

HITAVADI,
Feb. 12th, 1904.

10. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 12th February says that the keeper

A pound complaint.

of the Patakbari pound within the Kushtia sub-division of the Nadia district gives no food to the animals in his charge, although fines are strictly realised on their account. If an animal remains in the pound for even one hour, its owner has to pay 4 annas as fine and 1 anna as fodder charge.

MAHIMA,
Feb. 12th, 1904.

11. The *Mahima* [Calcutta] of the 12th February has the following:—

A case of police oppression in the 24-Parganas.

On the occasion of the artillery practice held at Haltooa and Lascar Itte near the Ballygunge railway station on the 1st and 2nd February, the

District Magistrate of Alipur issued a notice to the neighbouring villagers to keep out of the range of gun-shot between the hours of 5 A.M. and sunset, and they were directed to move with their domestic animals to some place to be pointed out to them by the police.

Though they were thus ordered to be away from home only between the hours of 5 A.M. and sunset, the police did not allow any one of them to return home on the 1st February. They had to spend the night in the open fields exposed to the severe cold. The authorities should make an enquiry into this matter.

NAVAYUG,
Feb. 13th, 1904.

12. The *Navayug* [Calcutta] of the 13th February complains about the

Unrestricted sale of cocaine in Calcutta.

unrestricted sale of cocaine in the town, and says that this practice and the petty thefts to which it leads, can only be stopped if the Excise Department takes vigorous action in the matter, or powers to arrest cocaine sellers be given to Police officers of all grades by the Police Commissioner.

RATNAKAR,
Feb. 13th, 1904.

13. The *Ratnakar* [Asansol] of the 13th February speaks of the preva-

Gambling in some villages in the Burdwan district.

lence of the ruinous habit of gambling among the cultivators and labourers of the Ondal, Dub-churhuria, Ramprasadpur, Pubaha and other villages under the Raniganj thana in the Burdwan district.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

14. The *Burdwan Sanjivani* [Burdwan] of the 9th February praises Mr. Roe, the District and Sessions Judge of Burdwan, for the ability with which he discharges his judicial duties and the speedy manner in which he disposes of cases, and hopes that he will be an erudite Judge in time.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
Feb. 9th, 1904.

Mr. Roe, the District Judge of Burdwan.

15. The *Navayug* [Calcutta] of the 13th February says that the large number of *ex parte* cases in the Calcutta Small Cause Court is due to the bailiffs omitting to serve the processes in many cases, and in some cases serving them on wrong parties and in wrong places. Reference is made to a case in which a process was stuck up at the entrance of the editor's house, in spite of his protest that the defendant, one Revati Mohan Sen, did not live there. It is a matter of regret that the authorities do not attend to such neglect of duty on the part of the bailiffs, to the serious trouble that might be caused to the defendant by the consequent *ex parte* decree against him, and to the likelihood of the party, in whose house the process is stuck up in spite of protest, coming in for a share of the trouble and annoyance thus caused.

NAVAYUG,
Feb. 13th, 1904.

The bailiffs of the Calcutta Small Cause Court.

(d)—Education.

16. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 10th February admits that the system of University education and University examination is susceptible of much improvement; that the knowledge gained by the graduates turned out by the Indian Universities is slight, superficial and, for the most part, learnt by rote; that many graduates cannot write together two correct sentences in English, and that they are a disgrace to the Universities by which they have been turned out. The writer admits the desirability of a reform of the present system. What he denies is that the present is a fit time to introduce such reform. Any attempt to introduce a really good system of education would be premature before education has spread widely among a people. It appears from papers published by Government itself that "of the total population of India, only 53 persons per mille are literate." When so many as 500 per mille of the total population are literate, it would be time enough to think of introducing a system of education that is really good. The framing of rigorous educational rules, on the pretext of educational reform, will only serve to extinguish even the faint glimmer of knowledge that now shines in this country in the midst of the surrounding darkness. Government will surely listen to the representation made in the Town Hall meeting.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA.
Feb. 10th, 1904.

The Universities Bill.

17. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 12th February writes as follows:—

Certain queries about the Vernacular Scholarship examinations.

It has been ruled that henceforth only a few selected candidates should be allowed to appear in the Vernacular Scholarship examinations. But the Director of Public Instruction has not yet given any intimation as to who will select the candidates and as to how the selections will be made. Again, will any examination be held for the remaining candidates? Will their successes and failures be ascertained? If so, how? Will those among them who are likely to pass be granted any certificates? If so, who will grant them? Will any student who has passed the final examination of any school be allowed, as before, to begin his studies in a higher school? For instance, will a student, who has finished the course of the 1st class of a lower primary school and who is likely to pass, be allowed to begin his studies in the 2nd class of an upper primary school or in the 4th class of a middle school? If so, who will give him a certificate for the purpose? Government is going to circumscribe the sphere of higher education in the country. Will it do the same in regard to lower education?

HITAVADI,
Feb. 12th, 1904.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

18. A correspondent of the *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 13th February speaks of the great prevalence of malaria and small-pox in the Saspur and neighbouring villages in the Bankura district. Since 1309 (B.S.) more

BANGAVASI,
Feb. 13th, 1904.

Malaria and small-pox in some villages in the Bankura district.

than 500 of the villagers have died of malaria. Small-pox has been raging since the month of *Jaistha* (B.S.) last.

BANGAYASI,
Feb. 13th, 1904.

19. Referring to the sales through Government, of their Majesties' pictures, the same paper says that the tenor of the debate in the Calcutta Corporation on this subject will certainly disconcert the Viceroy, who will pause to consider, in view of the loyal Indian's readiness to purchase such pictures, whether, in case an Indian artist like Ravi Varma should paint a likeness of their Majesties and pray Government to sell the picture, the Government would be justified in granting his prayer.

20. The *Nihar* [Contai] of the 16th February draws the attention of the authorities to the outbreak of cholera and small-pox in Contai, and recommends that two or more doctors with vaccinators should be sent to the place. The timely despatch of medical aid was mainly instrumental in saving many lives the year before. The adoption of proper sanitary measures with regard to drinking-water and cleanliness is also recommended.

NIHAR,
Feb. 16th, 1904.

Cholera and small-pox in Contai in the Midnapore district.

(g)—*Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.*

MAHIMA,
Feb. 12th, 1904.

21. The *Mahima* [Calcutta] of the 12th February writes as follows:—

Wanted a refreshment stall for Hindus at the Sealdah station.

There is no refreshment stall or waiting-room for Hindus at the Sealdah railway station. Lately one Babu Abinash Chandra Mukerji applied to the Manager of the Eastern Bengal State Railway for permission to supply this want, and his application was supported by many influential gentlemen of Calcutta. It is to be regretted that the Manager has rejected the application. It is noteworthy, however, that the railway authorities are never unwilling to sanction arrangements calculated to meet the requirements of European passengers. The small stall kept at the station by a Parsee gentleman fails to supply the needs of the Hindus.

HITAVADI,
Feb. 12th, 1904.

22. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 12th February says that there are no places set apart for third-class female passengers on the *Shorasi* and *Sukesi* steamers belonging to Messrs. Hoare, Miller & Co., which run between Ghatal and Calcutta. The steamers being generally overcrowded with male passengers, the third-class female passengers suffer great inconvenience. On the 18th January last, the correspondent saw a number of *khalasis* indulging in all sorts of coarse and vulgar jokes in the midst of 17 or 18 female passengers on the *Shorasi*. If not a cabin, at least a place enclosed by *purdas* should be set apart for female passengers in each of the steamers.

A steamer complaint.

(h)—*General.*

MEDINIPUR
PRAJARANJAN,
Jan. 26th, 1904.

23. The *Medinipur Prajaranjan* [Midnapore] of the 26th January has the following:—

The proposed transfer.

Lord Curzon, who is well versed in the mysteries of political science, is at the head of the Indian Administration, and we are confident that he will promote the welfare of the country. We have, therefore, no hesitation in saying, that the chance of any harm to Bengal, by the proposed territorial changes, is small. Bengal, if it include Chota Nagpur, Orissa, Chittagong, and Assam, cannot as a whole be regarded as having approached the standard of advancement reached by some of its more progressive communities, and we are not sure whether the Viceroy does not after all favour the policy of leaving alone the more progressive sections of the community under the Bengal Administration, in view of their further political aspirations. The Emperor has assumed our protection, and we may well leave to him to adopt any measures he thinks best to carry on the work of administration.

CHARU MIHIR,
Feb. 9th, 1904.

24. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 9th February remarks as follows:—

The proposed transfer.

We are grieved to say that we have been neglecting our domestic duties, nay, have forgotten the very name of God, in our feverish expectation of the approach of the 20th February next. The ghost of prestige,

to which many Indian interests have been sacrificed since the days of Lord Beaconsfield, has dismayed us. No clearer demonstration of the confidence of the people in the Bengal Administration is needed than this reluctance to part with it, and we humbly pray Lord Curzon to reassure our mind. If the proposals are not abandoned, we shall take it that considerations of this same prestige, deprecated so strongly by Mr. Risley in his letter have induced the Government to lay the axe at the root of the progress of Mymensingh and Dacca. The stain cast upon us by Mr. Risley's letter can be washed away only by the Viceroy's reassurance. Now our humble prayer to Lord Curzon is, "Blinded by considerations of prestige, do not banish us to the wilds of Assam."

25. The same paper contains reports of protest meetings held in three different places in the Mymensingh district.

CHARU MISIR,
Feb. 9th, 1904.

26. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 10th February writes as follows:—

The partition question.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-ANANDA
BAZAR PATRIKA,
Feb. 10th, 1904.

Does Government really think that the dangers apprehended by the people from the proposed territorial redistribution are as imaginary as the fancies of a hysteric woman? No keen-sighted statesman can, in our opinion, be deaf to the wail raised by a whole people. Truth, in these matters, is not to be reached by dint of disputation. Nor do we wish to convince Government of the injurious character of the proposed scheme by means of arguments. Arguments may be met by counter-arguments. If, for instance, the scheme is objected to on the ground of linguistic deterioration, Government may say that the students of Dacca, Mymensingh, and Chittagong will not be compelled to study Assamese when those places are transferred to Assam, that those students will continue to study the standard Bengali writers just as they do at present, that no such linguistic deterioration has taken place in the case of either Bihar or Orissa in spite of their subjection to the Bengal Government, nor has such deterioration followed from the division of Bengal into different Commissionerships. Why should then any fear of such deterioration be entertained so long as Government does not forbid the use of the books of West Bengal in East Bengal and *vice versa*, justifying its course on the ground that it is in the nature of language to develop dialectic varieties, and the dialect prevailing in one part of the country should not therefore be studied in another?

What we want Government principally to consider is whether the proposed transfer is not sure to do away with that political sympathy which now exists between East and West Bengal, and whether its disappearance will not be a loss to East Bengal. Influential Calcutta journals like the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, the *Bengalee*, and the *Indian Mirror* have not that minute and intimate knowledge of the policy of the Assam Government that they have of the policy of the Bengal Government. When East Bengal is, therefore, transferred to Assam, will it be possible for these journals to enter readily into the grievances of those places and to plead for them in a really effective manner? Would not the advocacy of those journals, besides, necessarily lose much of its fervour when they would be no longer afflicted by the same political evils that the people of the transferred area would suffer from? We have also to ask Government, for what fault is it that East Bengal, which has enjoyed so long the benefit of an advanced administration, is now going to be subjected to a backward administration?

It is our belief that, whatever others may think, this partition question is, at bottom, a frontier question. We believe Lord Curzon to be an adept in frontier policy. He has strengthened the North-Western frontier. The mighty and majestic Himalayas form a strong and impregnable boundary on the north. What is wanting is a strong North-Eastern frontier. Strengthening of frontiers is an evidence of political foresight. Lord Curzon is an intelligent man. Why should he then let slip an opportunity for frontier fortification? The question of the North-Eastern frontier has long engaged his attention. He has seen the Assam Valley and the whole of Burma, and many are very much alarmed to think that he may, after his proposed visit to East Bengal, carry out his frontier scheme.

It is intensely painful even to think that East Bengal should be governed according to the backward administrative policy which is fit only for the

savages who form the bulk of the population of Assam. The kind-hearted Lord Curzon is free to do anything he pleases to provide for administration in view of political requirements or to give effect to any scheme which he may have formed. But will he not so much as cast a glance on the hot tears wrung out of the eyes of hundreds of thousands of a subject people by intense mental anguish?

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
Feb. 10th, 1904.

27. Referring to the published official papers in connection with the Bain, Casey, Rennick, and Emerson cases, the same paper observes as follows:—

Government in cases of collision
between Europeans and natives.

The representation of the Chamber of Commerce on the subject has elicited from the Government, what seems to us to be a timorous reply, to the effect that it was not to blame in regard to the retrial of the accused, especially in the Bain and the Emerson cases; but in reply to the representation of the British Indian Association the Government has firmly declined to modify the jury system. We quite anticipated such a reply to a native Association and are not at all surprised at it. But what has pained us is that when the Government of India asked the Assam Administration for an expression of opinion on the Bain case, the Chief Commissioner while admitting the lightness of Bain's sentence and the necessity for its enhancement, was not still prepared to advise any action in the matter on account of the widespread agitation that would necessarily spring up among the European community.

EDUCATION GAZETTE,
Feb. 12th, 1904.

28. Referring to the proposed redistribution of territory, the *Education Gazette* [Chinsura] of the 12th February has the following:—

The proposed territorial redistribution.

This is the second proposal to dismember Bengal since the incorporation of Sylhet with Assam in 1874. We are of opinion that the whole of the hill tracts may, with advantage, be distributed between Assam and Burma. Sylhet should be re-assigned to Bengal to enjoy the benefits of the rent law and other laws suited to Bengalis, to which the people of that district are entitled, the Assamese and the people speaking the hill dialects being confined to the Chief Commissionership of Assam. A new Chief Commissionership may be formed for the benefit of the whole of the Uriya-speaking races with Sambalpur, Ganjam, the Garjat and the Gond Mahals. The Bengali-speaking portions of Chota Nagpur and Bihar may be left with Bengal, transferring the remainder, if necessary, to the North-Western Provinces; thus making Hindi the court language of the Upper Provinces. The separation of Bihar from Bengal, though not wholly unobjectionable, seems preferable to the partition proposed. The Punjab may be extended a little to the east and the south, thus lightening the burden on the ruler of the United Provinces. It would be better to keep the Hindi and Bengali languages under separate Local Governments, each of which might be given the services of one or two extra Secretaries, if necessary, who may dispose of minor questions, guided by general instructions from the head of the Government. It is not fair to propose, as has been done, a transfer of Uriya-speaking Ganjam to Bengal at the expense of the districts which form the very heart of Bengal and have given to it its present name. What we wish to lay stress upon, is, that Bengal can well part with Cuttack, Ranchi, Patna or even with Darbhanga or Tirhut, but never with Dacca, Mymensingh, Comilla, and Chittagong. The Viceroy, who possesses statesmanship of a high order, has certainly no *zid* on the subject, and we believe that after all the proposed partition will not be made.

HITAVADI,
Feb. 12th, 1904.

29. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 12th February writes as follows:—

Mr. Risley's letter to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

We have, with a grateful heart, read Mr. Risley's excellent reply to the memorial of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce on the subject of collisions between natives and Anglo-Indians. We cannot refrain from giving Lord Curzon many, many thanks for the firm attitude he has assumed in promoting the ends of justice. We doubt whether any other Viceroy would have dared to express the real truth in such plain and unambiguous terms against the memorial of the Anglo-Indian community. In fact, the letter clearly shows that Lord Curzon is not guided by any policy which would secure European offenders immunity from all punishment. "There is not in the record," says the letter, "the least justification for the belief that the balance

of justice has been deflected to the detriment of the European, or that the instrument of the law has been more readily set in operation against him, or that he has received severer penalties than the natives. On the contrary, it would be much easier to argue that the reverse is the case. . . . " Lord Curzon's Government has thus admitted what we have all along been saying. It is a matter of great regret that the Anglo-Indian community have resolved to frustrate the noble endeavours of the Government to set the course of justice right. But Lord Curzon is not the man to be cowed down by their fiery eyes, and we have an indication of this in Mr. Risley's letter, which says, "On the other hand, it is perhaps even more peculiarly the duty of Government to protect the interests of the subject millions for whose security from violence or oppression they are the responsible trustees, and to see that the equal justice between man and man, upon which it is the constant boast of Englishmen that their Empire in India depends, exists in reality as well as in name." These words will touch the heart of every Indian. Blessed is the ruler who can proudly say such words. Blessed is Lord Curzon. We present you our hearts' gratitude. None of your predecessors did ever show so much ardour and firmness in protecting the weak from the oppressions of the strong. If the Anglo-Indian memorialists have hearts, your words will touch them; if they have an atom of manliness in them, we shall no more hear of any agitation on the subject.

30. The same paper says that employes in the Government Central Press are obliged to work *begar* on holidays, although they are fined if they happen to be late even by a few minutes. Will Government enquire why no less than four thousand men resigned their services in the Press within the last ten years? It is said that the authorities of the Press have issued a rule to the effect that if any section-holder fails to show the attendance of the full number of compositors under him, he shall not receive extra for any extra work done by him. Thus one man is to be punished for the fault of another. How can section-holders compel compositors to attend regularly? Are they all immune from disease, etc.?

HITAVADI.
Feb. 12th, 1904.

31. A correspondent of the same paper thanks Mr. Garrett, the District Magistrate of Rajshahi, for adopting vigorous measures, in concert with the local zamindars, to rid the district of wild boars. These animals are a source of constant trouble, danger, and loss to the inhabitants of the district, destroying, as they do, the standing crops on their fields.

HITAVADI,

32. A Musalman correspondent writing to the *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 12th February protests as follows against certain allegations made by another Musalman correspondent in a previous issue (see Report on Native Papers for the 13th February, para. 59 (1) as to the way in which Musalmans were forced to attend a protest meeting lately held in Mymensingh:—

MIHIR- O-SUDHAKAR.
Feb. 12th, 1904.

I cannot bring myself to believe that an educated and conscientious man like your correspondent is capable of giving expression to views so narrow and unsympathetic. His bigotry and his sentiments calculated to create differences will surely pain exceedingly all honest and patriotic Musalmans. We have now come to feel that Bengal is not for Englishmen, nor for Hindus, nor for Musalmans, but for Bengalis. By seeking to separate us at the auspicious moment of the awakening of this national feeling Government has caused a strong agitation all over Bengal. It is curious that your correspondent, who makes so much of the numerical superiority which Musalmans will have in the constituted Assam, in the event of the proposed transfer, fails to see how newly inferior will be the numerical strength of the Musalmans who will be left to Bengal after such transfer. Why should Musalmans lay the axe at the root of manhood and conscience and prove themselves base sycophants, by supporting the wrong proposal made by Government? Do we not remember that "nations are by themselves made"? There is no hope of the progress of a people who want to depend entirely upon the favour and support of Government. Every educated Bengali ought to know that the Hindu and the Musalman are like the two eyes of Bengal, and that she looks to both for help in her progress. Hindus

and Musalmans are now like brothers. They have forgotten their former differences and are eager to wipe away the tears of their motherland, with one heart and one soul. Afflicted by the legalised robbery of foreigners and unable to find food, both Hindus and Musalmans are now making their sufferings known to the King of Kings with tears.

HITAVARTA.
Feb. 14th, 1904.

33. The *Hitavarta* [Calcutta] of the 14th February is sorry that the *Pioneer* and the *London Times* have adversely criticised the reply given by the Government of India to the Anglo-Indian memorials on the subject of the alleged misinterpretation of the law by that Government in cases in which Europeans are charged with assaulting natives. The memorials have been very justly dealt with by the Government, and the reply it has given shows its high mindedness and keen sense of justice.

BASUMATI.
Feb. 13th, 1904.

The residence of the late Mr. Madhusudan Dutta not included in the list of historical houses.

34. Referring to the placing of plates on houses of historic interest, the *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 13th February notices the omission to mark with a plate, No. 6, Lower Chitpur Road, where the great poet Michael Madhusudan Dutta spent the greater portion of his life.

BAR. SAI HITASHI.
Feb. 13th, 1904.

Appointments in the Barisal District Judge's Court.

35. The *Barisal Hitaishi* [Backergunge] of the 13th February regrets that the practice of filling up the vacancies on the ministerial staff of the District Judge's Court by the importation of relatives of the Court *amla*, of which several instances are cited, in supersession of the just claims of the qualified apprentices, is reducing the prospects of the latter of getting permanent appointments to a minimum, and hopes that the District Judge, Mr. Temple, will attend to the matter.

KHULNA
HITAISHI,
Feb. 13th, 1904.

The proposed dismemberment of Bengal.

36. The *Khulna Hitaishi* [Khulna] of the 13th February contains an article headed "A groundless fear," supporting the proposed scheme of territorial redistribution. The writer sees nothing to fear in the proposed transfer. The condition of Bengal has not changed by the separation of Assam from it. Nor will its condition change when it is attached to Assam. Bengalis are Bengalis and not Uriyas and Nagpuris by reason of the union of Orissa and Chutia Nagpur with Bengal. They will not cease to be Bengalis and become Assamese by reason of their transfer to Assam. There is nothing to fear from the proposed transfer, if only a Governor or Lieutenant-Governor is appointed for the newly constituted province, the capital is fixed in Dacca, the ancient capital of East Bengal, and a High Court is established in Dacca. What have Bengalis to fear when King Edward VII will still be their Sovereign and the generous Lord Curzon will still be their Viceroy? They should not oppose this scheme of territorial redistribution. The proposed transfer will prove the means of checking, through the agency of the East Bengal people and of the influential East Bengal zamindars, the wanton oppression by Europeans in general and the European tea-planters in particular, now so rife in Assam. The writer earnestly exhorts Lord Curzon to explain to the public this beneficial scheme and to carry it out, adopting the suggestions made above.

BANGAVASI,
Feb. 13th, 1904.

Wild boars in the Rajshahi district.

37. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 13th February takes Mr. Garrett, the District Magistrate of Rajshahi, to task for taking active measures to hunt down all wild boars in the district. The writer sarcastically says that this is a piece of generosity on the part of Mr. Garrett to save the disarmed inhabitants of Rajshahi from wild animals. The hunting excursions are to be headed by the Magistrate. Of course, the local zamindars will supply the hunting parties with food and look after their comforts. Have wild boars become, in reality, such a pest in the district as to necessitate the taking of the step? As to cutting down jungles, which also forms a part of Mr. Garrett's programme, for the purpose of preventing malaria, it may be asked, who are responsible for their growth? Will their removal really prevent malaria? Will the zamindars receive back the money which they will have to expend on the *shikar* parties?

BANGAVASI,

38. The same paper writes as follows:—

The protest agitation.

It is neither show nor pretence, neither fancy nor deceit. Many protest meetings are being held

against the proposed transfer; and their protest is reasonable. Those who do not admit this have no eyes to see, or ears to hear, or hearts to feel. He, who says that all this is fanciful, must be himself the victim of a most wild fancy. How can it be said that the protest has no life in it? To disbelieve our eyes and ears and disregard the truth would be simply sinful.

It is rumoured that the District Magistrate of Dacca has asked the local zamindars not to make any mention of the dismemberment question in the addresses which they will present to the Viceroy on the occasion of his visit to the town. There is no cause for despair, even if the rumour is true, because when His Excellency is going to the place he will surely discuss the matter fully. It is hoped that he will make arrangements for acquainting himself with the gravity and intensity of the agitation, and that he will call together all the principal men of the place and discuss the matter with them. We are even disposed to think that, being of an inquisitive frame of mind, His Excellency may, like Haroun-al-Rashid, travel *incognito* to know men's minds. It is said that there are some men in the camp of the protest agitation, who are likely to turn traitors. And we shall now see who are the true sons of mother Bengal. We shall now see the people who are unwilling to leave the mother's lap. We shall now know who is honest, and who is dishonest. We shall now see who is a believer, and who is an infidel. There is Lord Curzon in East Bengal. Come ye all men, run to the supreme ruler of all India—the representative of the Sovereign of the sea-girt earth—and open your hearts to him. By dint of your loyalty, meekness, and honesty of purpose you are sure to gain your object.

39. The same paper writes as follows:—

The Government in cases of collision between Europeans and natives.

The Chamber of Commerce in plain terms accused Government of injustice in the Bain, Rennick, Emerson, and Casey cases, and the Government in rebutting the charge gives them a

long explanation. On the other hand, though admitting the truth of the representations of the British Indian Association, the Government gives them a brief reply, declining to accede to their prayer for modifying the jury system. For ourselves, we are satisfied with this; for this is worship of the great and the powerful. The Anglo-Indian community ought to be satisfied with the calm and courteous reply of the Government and drop the agitation. The Indians, far from being antagonistic to the Anglo-Indian community, desire to receive good treatment at its hands, and they will in return learn to treat it with respect. The hope expressed by the *Times* to the effect that the endeavours of the Government to preserve impartial justice between the two communities will shorten the gulf between them, if fulfilled, will prove welcome to the country. The Indians are ashamed of the statement often current in Anglo-Indian circles, that the Anglo-Indian community belonging to the dominant race, is afraid of the Indian community. This fear is altogether groundless, and the controversy should now be allowed to be forgotten.

BANGAVADI.
Feb. 13th, 1904.

40. Referring to the address to be presented to the Viceroy by the Dacca District and Municipal Boards, the *Dacca Prakash*

The Viceroy's ensuing visit to Dacca.

[Dacca] of the 14th February is ashamed to find that the District Board have approved in their

address, proposals of dismemberment condemned by the people, and remarks that some of the Municipal Commissioners are prepared to resign, and that eight of the elected members of the District Board have already done so. The address of the Muhammadan community, acting under the guidance of the Nawab Bahadur, also contains an approval of these new proposals, and the public can readily anticipate the fate of the old capital. In this last extremity the people can only appeal to the Source of all good.

DACCA PRAKASH.
Feb. 14th, 1904.

41. The same paper contains reports of protest meetings against the proposed transfer held in eight different places.

Protest meetings.

III.—LEGISLATION.

42. Referring to the Report of the Select Committee on the Official Secrets Act Amendment Bill, the *Hitavadi*

The Official Secrets Act Amendment Bill.

[Calcutta] of the 12th February writes as follows:—

The cause of fear remains unremoved. An

HITAVADI.
Feb. 12th, 1904.

official invested with proper authority will be able to prosecute and harass any person he pleases, especially the newspaper editor. Alas! Our speech-making Viceroy said "No fear;" but we see there is no hope either, because the Select Committee has made no amendment worth the name. No opportunity has been afforded to the public to know what official matters are secret and what not. "Civil affairs" has been defined as—

"Affairs—

- (a) affecting the relations of His Majesty's Government or of the Governor-General in Council with any foreign State, or
- (b) affecting the relations of the Governor-General in Council with any Native State in India, or relating to the public debt or the fiscal arrangements of the Government of India or any other matters of State, where these affairs are of such a confidential nature that the public interest would suffer by their disclosure."

In spite of this strange definition we are as much in the dark as before. What we understand is that the authorities may, if they so desire, say that such matters as the Persian Gulf affair, the Chinese affair, and the Tibetan affair, are all secret matters. We also understand that the ivory furniture affair, the deposition of the Maharaja of Panna, the expenses of the Delhi Darbar, and all fiscal matters should be considered secret. Besides these, "other matters" also are secret and their disclosure would be punished by imprisonment. Now, how can men know what matters will be considered by the authorities to be "of such a confidential nature that the public interest would suffer by their disclosure"? The Bill therefore remains as dreadful as before, and the Viceroy's word of hope turns out to be an empty sound. The possibility of innocent people being prosecuted remains also as strong as before, because the onus lies on the accused person to prove that he is innocent. What a fine measure! Are we to be deceived by a flourish of words?

My Lord! Have we not lived under the British Government long enough to acquire a little sense? We understand everything, we know everything, but we have a very bad luck; why should we else be burned in this dreadful fire? Why, living as we do under British rule, should we lose the freedom of the press? Lord Curzon says, fear not; but can his words alone remove our mental suffering? Lord Curzon! God alone knows what is in your mind. But whatever may be your real intention, the fearful machines which you are creating will grind and burn the Indians for ever. Will you not quit the country before sending it to perdition? In your Delhi Darbar you astonished the world by playing the *role* of a Badshah; you made elephants dance and princes dance, and played a nice part. The whole world looked on and saw how glorious and how powerful the representative of the Emperor of India is. The people of the country, forgetting themselves, saw pyrotechnics and *tamashas*; they forgot their diseases, their sorrows, their wants, their grievances, and repressed their suffering from plague and famine. Outsiders thought how happy the Indians were. Again you are playing the *role* of a Russian Tsar, and the making and unmaking of laws proclaim your greatness. You are causing revolutions in the territorial division of the country and in education, and even in the matter of that freedom of the press, which is a glory of the British rule. You are a great person possessed of great powers, and endowed with education and many other noble gifts. Who can therefore check the course of you power? We are weak subjects, slaves of your arbitrariness, and so you are going to reduce us to the condition of a Russian subject by depriving us of the privilege of a British citizen. Withdraw from us this terrible appearance. We are your dependants, you are our protector. Hold out no more fears, we have had enough of them. We are ever loyal and peace-loving. Do not destroy our mental peace.

MAHIMA,
Feb. 12th, 1904.

43. The *Mahima* [Calcutta] of the 12th February writes as follows:—

The Official Secrets Act Amendment Bill.

We cannot say that there has been no improvement at all, in the Select Committee, of the Official Secrets Bill. Nevertheless, the form in which it has emerged from the Committee is sufficiently alarming. One reads in the amended Bill that only persons, who go to a Government office to procure official news of a confidential nature, the onus of proving such intention being on the Government, will be prosecuted. We must say that this is the best of a bad bargain. Certain portions of the Bill which deal with the publication of news relating to civil or administrative matters still require

amendment. We entirely agree as to the grounds on which the three Indian Members of the Select Committee have recorded their dissent. The Bill provides for prosecution in the case of publication of news relating to civil or administrative matters. This might prove injurious. As Government, which is also the prosecutor, is to decide what news is harmless, and what is not, is there no possibility of troubles arising at every step? We cannot at all discern the necessity for the present Bill. Can the Government make out a satisfactory case for the introduction of the measure? Admitting for argument's sake the necessity for amending the existing Act, why was the amending Bill originally introduced in such a dangerous form? Why is not the English law on this subject being followed, in framing the present Bill? We are glad to have the Viceroy's assurance that he is not the originator of the Bill and that the amendment of the existing law was in contemplation long before his arrival in India. Though not the originator, he is still being blamed as the supporter of the measure. We hope His Excellency will not fail to amend the measure on the lines recommended by the three dissenting native Members.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

44. A correspondent of the *Burdwan Sanjivani* [Burdwan] of the 9th February reports a failure of crops in the villages of Patharkoochi, Dangapara, Talghata, and Decoori under Ausgram police-station in the Burdwan district, and states that there is great distress among the inhabitants. Government is asked to take steps to grant relief to the raiyats.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
Feb. 9th, 1904.

45. A correspondent from the Doro mahal of the *Medini Bandhab* [Midnapore] of the 10th February reports impending scarcity and distress, and says that the officers of the benign Government are distraining their property for current rent as well as for arrears of rent. There is much consternation in the mind of the people at the survey operations which are in full swing, and about which they have so much to say. The revenue charge of the pargana, it is reported, is being transferred to Contai from Tamluk, in spite of possible inconvenience to the people. It is a pity that they are being deprived of hoped-for favours, though they are khas mahal tenants of the Government.

MEDINI BANDHAV,
Feb. 10th, 1904.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

46. Referring to the indignities to which Bengali gentlemen who went to witness the annual European sports at Berhampur got up by public subscriptions were said to have been subjected at the hands of the sentries, the *Murshidabad Hitaishi* [Berhampur] of the 10th February says that even the meanest Europeans have free access everywhere, but respectable Bengalis are treated with scant courtesy. This is the way Bengalis are honoured by Europeans. Even after their experience of this year, Bengalis will not probably feel ashamed to increase their contributions next time.

MURSHIDABAD
HITAISHI,
Feb. 10th, 1904.

URIYA PAPERS.

47. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* [Balasore] of the 27th January and the *Samvad Vahika* [Balasore] of the 4th February state that last week there was a shower of rain in the northern part of the Balasore district. This has made the weather a little cooler.

URIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD,
Jan. 27th, 1904.

48. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* [Balasore] of the 27th January alludes to the introduction of the electric saw in France, and proposes to have it introduced in India in the interests of the Indian forests.

URIYA AND NAA-
SAMVAD,

49. The same paper approves of the ruling of the Punjab Chief Court, calling upon all legal practitioners practising within its jurisdiction to stick to the parties, whose *vakalatnama* they have accepted, till the end of the suits or cases for which they are engaged, and not to change sides, as has often been

URIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD,
Feb. 4th, 1904.

the case. The writer, however, observes that this ruling should apply with equal force to the Barristers as well as other legal practitioners.

SAMAD VAHIKA,
Feb. 4th, 1904.

50. The *Samvad Vahika* [Balasore] of the 4th February corrects itself by stating that the death reported in the last week to have occurred in the boarding-house attached to

A correction.

the Balasore Zilla School, was due not to cholera but to heart disease.

UTKALDIPIKA,
Feb. 6th 1904.

51. The *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack] of the 6th February approves of the appointment of Babu Sarada Charan Mitra as a Judge of the High Court of Judicature, Calcutta,

Babu Sarada Charan Mitra.

and observes that the Government of India has acted wisely by appointing an Indian Judge in the place of Justice Banerjee, who has retired.

UTKALDIPIKA.

52. The same paper is of opinion that the Civil and Criminal Courts in the interior of Bengal stand in great need of inspection

Inspection of mufassal law-Courts in Bengal.

and is glad to learn that the Chief Justice of Bengal has made arrangements for their supervision by a senior Judge of the High Court. This will give general satisfaction.

UTKALDIPIKA.

53. Referring to the sale of zamindaris by the Collector of Cuttack for arrears of revenue, the same paper finds facts to

The value of land in the Cuttack district.

prove that the value of land in the Cuttack district since the last settlement has been depreciating year after year, for while zamindaris fetched 20 or 25 times their annual *sadar jama* in former years they are now bid for 10 or 12 times that *jama*. The writer concludes by observing that but for the leniency shown to the defaulting estates by the Collector, a large number of them would have been put up for sale.

UTKALDIPIKA.

54. The same paper regrets to learn that the number of dacoities in the Midnapore district is fast increasing and the police

Dacoity and chaulkidari-tax.

has hitherto failed to bring the offenders to justice. It is a pity that the people pay chaulkidari-tax, but that their persons and properties are not well protected.

UTKALDIPIKA.

55. The same paper gives a full account of the proceedings of a public meeting, held in the Jubilee Park, Cuttack, for the purpose of congratulating Mr. M. S. Das, on behalf of the Uriya public, on his acquisition of the title of

Mr. M. S. Das, congratulated.

C. I. E., and of thanking Government for the same. The meeting consisted of members representing all sections of the Indian community at Cuttack.

UTKALDIPIKA.

56. The same paper continues its article on the territorial redistribution of districts in the Provinces of Bengal, Assam,

The territorial redistribution question.

Madras, and the Central Provinces, and observes that though Mr. Howells, a Baptist Missionary, aided by a few young men, wants to have Orissa transferred to the Central Provinces, the general opinion of the natives of Orissa is in favour of a united Orissa placed under the Bengal Government. The writer regrets to learn that several influential Telegus in Ganjam are trying their best to induce the Uriyas of that district to sign a petition against the transfer of Ganjam to Orissa. The writer therefore states that it would be difficult for Government to find out the true public opinion without examining the signatures carefully. The *Samvad Vahika* [Balasore] of the 4th February agrees with the *Utkaldipika* on this subject.

ASSAM PAPERS.

PARIDARSAN,
Feb. 7th, 1904.

57. The *Paridarsan* [Sylhet] of the 7th February publishes the following correspondence in English:—

The proposed transfer.

There is an impression in certain quarters that in the event of the amalgamation of Assam with Bengal or a portion thereof, we, the people of Sylhet, would be deprived of some of the advantages which we, as members of a comparatively backward province, are now enjoying. This may to a certain extent be true. But it is also equally true that whatever loss we may have to sustain now will be more than counterbalanced eventually, for it is an undeniable fact that our connection with a more advanced community, having a better form of Government, cannot fail to exercise an elevating influence all round. We said before and we repeat it now, that all this is on the

assumption that with readjustment of territories, there will be an organic change of Government in the reconstituted province. For, with the present non-regulation system of administration remaining in force, the proposed change will rather prove a curse than a boon to us as well as to the people of the districts proposed to be transferred. It will have the effect of depriving us of the valued privileges which we have so long possessed, while it will bring those districts down to our level instead of raising us to theirs. In this connection we would commend to the earnest attention of our readers the pregnant words of our late Chief Commissioner, Mr. (now Sir Henry) Cotton, who, in his note recorded in 1897 on the Government proposal of transferring Chittagong Division to Assam, observed as follows:—"For my part, I am convinced that the Division of Chittagong would not gain in any respect by being transferred to Assam. It is impossible to conceive that any civilized portion of Bengal would gain by being detached from the advanced province. If the Chittagong Division is not at present as advanced as the Bengal districts which are in the immediate neighbourhood of the metropolis, it is at least governed by the same laws, administered by the same office, and forms part and parcel of the same Government; it is continually being levelled up to a high standard: but if it is transferred to Assam, the tendency would be to level it down to the lower standard of that province."

We, however, regret to say that so far we have not had any indication that Government intends to give us a better form of administration. Some District Officers in Eastern Bengal, realizing the hopelessness of the situation, have no doubt suggested the possibility of a Lieutenant-Governor being sanctioned for the reconstituted province. But whether the suggestion has been made with the sanction or approval of Government is more than we can say. It appears that with the transfer of the Chittagong Division and the districts of Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam, the new province will not be large enough to pay the expenses of a Lieutenant-Governor with his staff. This point has been made clear by Sir Henry Cotton in his note referred to above. It will therefore be necessary to cut off a much larger portion from Bengal than has been proposed, if a Lieutenant-Governor is to be appointed to the new province. This also has been suggested in certain quarters, but we do not think Government will be prepared to attempt anything of the kind, and that for a very simple reason;—there will then be left precious little of Bengal proper in the province of Bengal. It will thus be seen that the proposal of Government is beset with many insurmountable difficulties, and it seems likely therefore that Government may be obliged to quietly withdraw from its untenable position unless it cares to carry its proposal through by sheer weight of its authority, in spite of the difficulties, and in defiance of public opinion. The problem is of deep moment, and cannot be allowed to stand at rest; and it would not only be very impolitic, but disastrous to the people concerned, if the proposal is carried out in its present shape. Government has shown that some change is necessary. Now, the question is how best it can be carried out. As we said before, the appointment of a Governor with an Executive Council for Bengal and Assam will meet the objection and prove a boon to all concerned. If, however, this does not meet with the wishes of Government, we would humbly beg to suggest that Bihar and Orissa may be detached from Bengal, and Assam placed under the Lieutenant-Governor of that province. Bihar may be transferred to the United Provinces, while Orissa may go to the Central Provinces.

While the question of territorial redistribution is on the tapis, we would earnestly invite the attention of our Chief Commissioner to the desirability of entertaining a Commissioner for the Surma Valley District. The question is an important one. The duties of the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet are very onerous, and it is absolutely necessary that he should be relieved of some of his functions, which he has at present to exercise as Commissioner, so that he can devote his undivided attention to his legitimate duties. As regards the seat of the Commissioner, if Government is pleased to sanction one, it is perhaps needless to say that Sylhet is by far the best place that could be selected. There cannot be a question as regards its importance. The only thing that can be urged against the head-quarters being located at Sylhet is the comparative inconvenience of its communication. But with the completion

of the railway line connecting it with the Assam-Bengal Railway, which has been sanctioned by Government, this difficulty will be removed. We propose to revert to the subject.

PANIDARSAK,
Feb. 7th, 1904.

58. The same paper says that the scheme of vernacular and primary education, as promulgated in Bengal, has been adopted in Assam. But the additional staff required to conduct the examinations have not been sanctioned, with the result that after a long lapse of time the certificates were issued last year without examination. The examinations that are now being held are beyond the power of one Deputy Inspector with the existing staff of Sub-Inspectors to manage. Teachers of high and middle schools should have been temporarily employed to assist the existing staff in their work, in view of the scheme of additional staff remaining unsanctioned. The disappointment of the people at the supreme indifference of the Government is great.

NARAYAN CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA,

Bengali Translator

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 20th February, 1904.